



Sunday November 06, 2022

My Mind

Part 4: Controlling Your Thoughts, Training Your Thinking

Review:

In part 1, we discuss **"The Mind, Imagination and Mental Health."**

In part 2, we address the topics of **"Concentration, Distractions, Wandering"**.

In part 3, we try to understand how **"Temptations, Addictions, Deceptions"** work and how to overcome these.

In part 4, we learn about **"Controlling Your Thoughts, Training Your Thinking"** so we can use our faculties effectively.

In part 5, we discover the important discipline of **"Renewing Your Mind and Renewed Thinking"**, that transforms our way of life.

In part 6, we learn the Biblical way to **"Overcoming Negative Thoughts"**, an important area for all of us.

In part 7: we understand the importance of **"Maintaining a Positive Mindset"**.

Our objective in this study is to understand what the Bible teaches us about the mind, our mental and emotional well-being (formally referred to as mental health) and develop a Biblical approach to maintaining a strong, healthy mind, maintaining good mental health and a positive mindset. We would like to a healthy mind and good mental health, the Bible way.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NASB)

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Quick Review:

KEPT HOLY AND WHOLE

The God of peace, Himself, desires to work in me so that my thinking, reasoning, intelligence, emotions, imaginations, and memory can be made holy and kept whole, sound, and in good health. (Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:23)

SOUND MIND

The Holy Spirit empowers me with a sound, disciplined and self-controlled mind that has a sound understanding, a sound concentration and a sound memory. (Based on 2 Timothy 1:7).



BIBLICAL MEDITATION involves:

ATTENTION “pay attention to my words”. Focus on the Word of God.

INCLINATION “incline your ear to my sayings”. Lean over to hear God’s Word. Cut out distractions.

VISUALISATION “they are not to escape from your sight”. Imagine what the Word is describing.

ASSIMILATION “keep them in the midst of your heart”. Absorb, imbibe, and make the Word part of your life.

CONFESSION “the Word is in your mouth”. Say what the Word of God says.

Keep your mind SAFE against temptations, addictions, and deceptions.

SPEAK the Word of God.

ACT aligned to The Word of God.

FOCUS on The Word.

EXAMINE ideas considering the Word.

Today:

In this chapter, we discover what the Bible teaches and instructs us regarding controlling our thoughts and training our thinking.

Meditate On These Things

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

The Bible is instructing us to think on things that are good. We must fix our minds or keep our thoughts continually on good things. The Amplified Bible (2015 Edition) uses the following adjectives. We are to think on things that are true, honorable, worthy of respect, right, confirmed by God’s word, pure, wholesome, lovely, things that bring peace, admirable, good repute, excellent, and worthy of praise.

The big question is how do we do this? For many of us we find this very difficult. It is not easy because we are so use to thinking things that are not in line with what the Bible has stated here. How do we control our thoughts and train our thinking?



Understanding The Formation of Strongholds

2 Corinthians 10:3–6

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Let's look at the progression:

Thought → Argument (reasoning) → Imagination → Stronghold

It usually begins with a simple **THOUGHT**. The thought could be an idea, suggestion, word, or picture, directly popped into our minds by a wicked spirit intercepting our normal thought processes. It could come through things we hear someone say or what we see.

The wrong thought if not arrested at that point, will develop into an **ARGUMENT** or reasoning. It then begins to argue against the truth or standard set by God's Word ("against the knowledge of God").

Having displaced God's Word in our minds, the reasoning then develops into an **IMAGINATION**, where we see ourselves being and doing what the thought suggested. This is the next thing closest to real-life; it almost feels real.

If the imagination is not cast down, it leads to repeated activity or repeated focus (contemplation) leading to it becoming a **STRONGHOLD** in the person's mind. A stronghold is a fort or castle. This refers to any area of our minds that has been occupied and fortified by thoughts empowered by demons sometimes housing those deceiving spirits themselves. A stronghold is a "house" made of thoughts, reasonings, arguments, and imaginations. It is an area in our souls (mind, will, and emotions) which the enemy has gained control over and therefore has led to our disobedience.

To fulfill obedience, that is, bring our lives into obedience unto God, we must use the weapons of our warfare to pull down strongholds, cast down imaginations, and arguments and take every thought captive to the Word of God and the Lordship of Christ.

Example:



Let us consider the case of a young man, who initially does not drink wine (or any other “strong drink”). Let us say that he happens to see a pastor/preacher drink a small cup of wine during a wedding toast. The enemy could use this occasion to plant a thought in his mind—“since the pastor/ preacher drank, it is perfectly fine to drink wine after all.”

The young man begins to play with this thought in his mind. He then begins to reason or argue in his mind. “After all, wine is served in church when celebrating the Lord’s Table. After all, Jesus turned water to wine. I saw that preacher drinking some wine. I even saw that person drinking some other “strong drink.” All my friends drink, and they are good guys. I will be careful and not get drunk. So, I think it should be fine if I drink wine occasionally.” Thus, reasoning and arguments rise in his mind, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.

Soon imaginations begin to be painted in his mind. He sees himself in the bar with his friends or at other occasions, where he drinks wine. And shortly thereafter, he begins doing so. Over time, what began as an occasional event becomes a regular habit and eventually a necessary thing. A stronghold has been built and the young man is in bondage.

Dangerous Progression

Think about this progression that is often observed empirically in what happens in people’s minds, including that of believers.

Deception → Depression → Oppression → Obsession → Occupation (Stronghold)

A **DECEPTION** is a lying thought, idea or an argument against the Word of God. It presents the truth as a lie, or a lie as truth. The devil is a deceiver and can deceive individuals, communities, and entire nations. Embracing a lie affects normal behavior leading even to unreasonable, irrational, and unrestrained behavior. This could subsequently lead to **DEPRESSION** often expressed or experienced as feelings of gloominess, dejection, sadness, decreased activity, hopelessness, inadequacy. The enemy (demonic powers) often use this weak moment to oppress the individual. The individual experiences **OPPRESSION**, with feelings of being crushed or overpowered, sometimes experienced through compulsive thoughts, feelings, behavior, and other unexplainable or abnormal problems. This could then lead to a state of **OBSESSION** where the individual’s mind is besieged, haunted, fixed on a thought or an idea to an unreasonable degree. This will eventually lead to **OCCUPATION** or what the Bible calls a



stronghold where the enemy (demonic powers) are able to inhabit, occupy, control, dominate, rule in that area of the individual's mind and thought process.

The important thing is to prevent such progression. Stop it at the point of the deceiving thought that impinges on the mind.

We will also learn how to tear down strongholds or areas of our mind that have been occupied by demonic powers with their wrong thoughts and ideas.

The Weapons of Our Warfare

2 Corinthians 10:4

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.

With the spiritual weapons that God has given us, we can:

- **Take every thought captive.** The moment the thought arrives it is captured and made ineffective. It is not entertained and hence not energized in our minds in any way.
- **Cast down arguments (reasoning) that contradict the Word of God.** To cast down means to demolish, pull down and to destroy. These arguments are nullified and lose their power to influence our thinking in any way.
- **Cast down imaginations.** Similarly, the imaginations in our mind can be torn down and completely eliminated. They do not have to have any space in our minds and cannot influence our emotions any longer.
- **Pull down strongholds.** These fortresses that were built in our minds are demolished and the territory they occupied is regained. We become completely free in that area from wrong thoughts and demonic influences.

We know the spiritual weapons we have. We mention some of these here:

The spoken Word of God

The name of Jesus

The blood of the Lamb

Praise and worship

The spoken Word of God

We learned in the previous chapter from the example of Jesus (Matthew 4:1–11) how we counter every evil thought and imagination presented by the devil with the Word of



God. We speak the Word of God to negate every evil thought. Ephesians 6:17 teaches us to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The name of Jesus

The name of Jesus gives us authority over the enemy. In Mark 16:17 the Lord Jesus taught us that using His name we will cast out demons. Demonic powers are subject to us in the name of Jesus (Luke 10:17,19).

The blood of the Lamb

We overcome the enemy by declaring what the blood of Jesus Christ has done for us and the redemption we have because of the blood of Jesus (Revelation 12:11). The Bible teaches us that those who have been redeemed by the Lord must say so (Psalm 107:2).

Praise and Worship

Our praise and worship to God is a force against the enemy (Psalm 8:2; Matthew 21:16). Our praise and worship to our God is a fortress, a place of safety and security against the enemy. When we praise and worship our God the enemy is silenced and stopped. Psalm 149:6-7 reveals that the high praises of God in our mouth is a weapon against the enemy, inflicting judgment and punishment on the enemy.

As believers, we have to learn how to use the “weapons of our warfare” that God has given to us, to take every **thought** captive, to cast down **arguments** (reasonings), to cast down **imaginations** and to pull down **strongholds** in our minds.

When evil thoughts, arguments, or imaginations come into our minds, we can negate them by speaking (or even thinking) the Word of God that counteracts their purpose. We say in the name of Jesus I reject that wrong thought. We declare that we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus, we are in covenant with God through the blood of Jesus and so we do not have to accept any work of the enemy. We praise and worship God in faith and that thwarts the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Give specific scenarios, e.g. fear of failure, fear of sickness, fear of harm and danger, etc.

The Helmet of Salvation

Ephesians 6:13–17

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

**14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;**



16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The helmet of salvation guards the area of the mind.

If a soldier did not wear his helmet, he would fall an easy prey to the sweeping battle-ax or the sword of the enemy. His head would roll!

We wear the helmet of salvation by aligning our minds (thoughts, reasoning, and imagination) to the completed work of salvation that God has already done for us.

Understand salvation and all that it encompasses.

Be convinced in our minds of the reality of our salvation.

Think in agreement with the salvation given to us by God.

This ensures that we have the helmet of salvation on.

When we know our salvation and have our minds aligned to it, we guard ourselves effectively against satan's attacks on our minds.

Taking Action In The Mind

1 Peter 1:13

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Mind (Gr. 'dianoia') = deep thought, imagination, mind, understanding.

The phrase "gird up the loins of your mind" is rendered like this in other translations:

(Contemporary English Version) Be alert and think straight.

(English Standard Version) Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded,...

(Goodnews Bible) So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert...

(Message Bible) So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready...

(New American Standard Bible 2020) Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit,...

(The Passion Translation) So then, prepare your hearts and minds for action! Stay alert...



To “gird up the loins of your mind” indicates that we need to take action in our minds. We must take control of our minds. We cannot remain passive in our minds and just accept whatever comes our way. We must avoid passivity. We should not keep our minds blank. An idle mind becomes the devil’s workshop.

Say this:

My mind is mine.

I will decide what thoughts should go on in my mind.

I refuse to allow my mind to wander aimlessly.

CARE for your mind

CARE for your mind. Here is a short acronym to help us take action in our minds using the word CARE:

CAST DOWN thoughts, arguments, reasonings, and imaginations that not good, wholesome or are against the Word of God.

ARREST, take captive, bring into submission all wrong thoughts the moment they come into your mind.

REPLACE wrong thoughts and ideas with the Word of God.

EXPEL demonic spirits and influences that may have gained access into your thinking.

Taking Control of Our Minds—Fighting Fiery Darts

The enemy will send his fiery darts of thoughts against our minds. We must judge or evaluate every thought, every reasoning, and every imagination in the light of Scripture. Discern, discipline, and deal with (develop or demolish) every thought.

Speak the Word into your own mind. For every negative thought use the Word of God to produce positive thoughts, to get rid of it.

Paint new pictures and imaginations in your mind with the Word of God concerning every area of my life.

The Words People Speak

We must develop the ability to receive or reject what people say.



Words that people speak can either bless or hurt the soul—mind, will, and emotions. Therefore, we need the ability to counteract and limit the impact of negative words.

Counteract negative words that people speak, with what God has already spoken about you. “I am who God says I am, I can do what God says I can do, I will become everything God has promised!”

Pulling Down Strongholds

Pulling down strongholds needs a bit more work.

Thoughts, arguments, and imaginations come and go through the mind every day. But strongholds have been built over a period.

- Repent. Repentance simply means a change in your thinking. Start thinking differently.
- Submit that area to God.
- Reject (resist) corresponding demonic spirits that may have gained entrance.
- Renounce every activity that would have opened doors to demonic influences.
- Remove the bricks. A stronghold is a “house” made up of thoughts. Each one of these bricks that are built in the stronghold must be dislocated and removed with the Word. God’s Word is like a hammer that breaks them down (Jeremiah 23:29).

Part of “pulling down strongholds” happens as we renew our mind. We will discuss this in detail in the next chapter.

REVIEW

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EXPEL demonic spirits and influences that may have gained access into your thinking.

SALVATION CALL

SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday November 06, 2022

My Mind

Part 4: Controlling Your Thoughts, Training Your Thinking

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our [sermons page](#). Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture references: *Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 10:3–6; 1 Peter 1:13*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

Q1, Discuss the progression of thoughts eventually becoming strongholds, as outlined for us in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

Q2, Discuss how we use the “weapons of our warfare” that God has given to us, to take action in our mind by bringing every thought captive, casting down arguments (reasonings), imaginations and pulling down strongholds in our minds.



The spoken Word of God

The name of Jesus

The blood of the Lamb

Praise and worship

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>

SERMON OUTLINE

Mental health has to do with how you are doing in your soul - your mind, will and emotions. It has to do with your emotional and psychological well-being. Having good mental health, being sound, well and whole in your soul is important because it affects how we feel, think, and behave. It affects how we go about life, how we relate to others, how we face challenges and handle difficult situations and how we do in things we are responsible for - education, work, etc. When we are doing well mentally, we can enjoy life, enjoy meaningful relationships, enjoy work, overcome life's challenges, be productive, keep growing towards our full potential and make meaningful contributions to those around us. The fact is that all of us face challenges at one point or another, with our mental health, our emotional and psychological well-being. There is nothing wrong in recognizing the difficulties you are facing, to get help, and address those mental health challenges in a positive way.

In this sermon series we discover a Biblical approach towards training and developing our soul, so that we can maintain good mental health, live with soundness, wellness, and wholeness in our mind, with a good, healthy positive mindset. In part 1, we discuss "The Mind, Imagination and Mental Health." In part 2, we address the topics of



"Concentration, Distractions, Wandering". In part 3, we try to understand how "Temptations, Addictions, Deceptions" work and how to overcome these. In part 4, we learn about "Controlling Your Thoughts, Training Your Thinking" so we can use our faculties effectively. In part 5, we discover the important discipline of "Renewing Your Mind and Renewed Thinking", that transforms our way of life. In part 6, we learn the Biblical way to "Overcoming Negative Thoughts", an important area for all of us. In part 7: we understand the importance of "Maintaining a Positive Mindset".

KEYWORDS

mind, mental health, mood, positive mindset, peace of mind, mental fitness, mental well-being, emotional well-being, controlling my thoughts, training my mind, renewed mind, renewing my mind, spiritual mind, Bible and mental health, Biblical mental health, negative thoughts, emotional disorders, mental illness, concentration, distraction, temptations, addictions, negative thoughts, sermon, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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Biblical definitions, Hebrew and Greek words and their meanings are drawn from the following resources:

Thayer's Greek Definitions. Published in 1886, 1889; public domain.

Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance by James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D. Published in 1890; public domain.

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